

*For Immediate Release*

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**Governor Warner Announces Funds for Public Water Projects in Lee and Tazewell Counties**  
**— Funding from abandoned mine program will serve 124 homes in six communities**  
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**RICHMOND** - Governor Mark R. Warner announced today that Lee County and Tazewell Counties will split approximately \$969,500 in Abandoned Mine Land (AML) funding for public water projects. The funds will help connect 124 homes in six communities with clean and safe public water. Water supplies in these communities were impacted by pre-1981 coal surface mining activities and are eligible for funding by Virginia's AML Program, which is funded from reclamation taxes paid by the state's coal industry.

"We have connected more than 70,000 Virginians with clean and reliable public water in the last four years, nearly tripling the goal I set my first year in office," said Governor Warner. "For communities in the Coalfields, this program is important to help fund public water projects in areas dealing with limited or no access to clean and safe water."

The Red Ash Community and Environs Water Line Extension project will service 52 households in the Raven and Red Ash communities in western Tazewell County. It completes the Tazewell County Public Service Authority's efforts to develop a regional domestic water supply for northwestern Tazewell County. The project will connect the previously AML-funded water projects of Johnson Hollow, Red Root Ridge, Shortt Gap, and Road Ridge as well as their regional connections to neighboring Buchanan County. Additional project funding will be provided through the Tazewell County Public Service Authority.

The Robbins Chapel Water Extension, Phase II project will service 72 households in the Robbins Chapel, Hoover Chapel, Sheppard Chapel, and Sigma communities in eastern Lee County. It extends the recently completed AML-funded Robbins Chapel Phase I project.

"Over the last four years, Southwest Virginia's local governments, planning district commissions, and public service authorities have increased their collaboration to bring needed public water to their communities using AML grants and supplemental funding," said Commerce and Trade Secretary Michael J. Schewel. "Nearly \$18 million in AML funding has helped provide water to 4,014 coalfield households since 1984."

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